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New York

President:	Mr. Rugunda	(Uganda)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Somdah
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Guillermet
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2009/373)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2009/373)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Somalia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Omaar (Somalia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Lamamra to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Ould Abdallah to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2009/373, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia.

At this meeting, the Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Ould Abdallah: I am grateful for this opportunity to brief the Council.

While the situation remains fragile, there have been positive developments in Somalia. As I have told the Council previously, a new paradigm is being implemented. Despite multiple constraints, the Government is resisting and repelling multiple attempts to overthrow it and seize power illegally by force. It is also overcoming two decades of scepticism over Somalia.

I believe that, today, we are at a turning point. It is clear that the population and its traditional leaders reject violence and those behind it. Therefore, the support of the international community is even more crucial at this time.

In that context, I would like to recognize once again the extraordinary help provided by members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the League of Arab States, the African Union, the European Union and Commission, the Contact Group, including the United States, Norway and many others, especially the subregional organization the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). They have mobilized quickly to provide critical assistance on the ground, as pledged during the Brussels conference in April, which was attended by the Secretary-General. To facilitate this process, the Somali Government has employed the services of an international accounting firm to ensure transparency.

The Government has made significant progress in training, equipping and paying its security forces. However, more needs to be done, especially in the area of coordination and organization. At the same time, the political process is moving forward. The Djibouti

agreement, signed in August last year, remains open to those who want to address the Somali situation through peaceful means. Recently, an important agreement was signed between the Government and the well-respected religious group Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a, which has already shown results. There has also been the inclusion of some elements from an opposition group, and one of its leaders has become a deputy minister. That open-door policy should be continued.

My understanding is that the Government would welcome members of those currently in the opposition, be they leaders or simply members of the rank and file of their groups. Somalis should discuss peace among themselves in their own country. Those who fail to join the peace process will miss an opportunity to contribute to rebuilding the country. My Office stands ready to assist and help the continued discussion among Somalis.

The time has come to focus on the needs and interests of ordinary citizens in Somalia, who are denied food to alleviate their hunger and protection against fear. Their suffering should strike at the heart of all Somali patriots and be the main international concern. Their country has been taken hostage by a small group interested only in its own immediate profit. Insecurity is becoming a source of revenue and power.

The Somali people have endured too much. They have seen their loved ones killed and maimed. They have been forced to flee their homes again and again and suffered endless abuses of their human rights. Their suffering must be ended if they are to live normal lives, as people do in many other African countries.

In this context, I condemn the abduction of all innocent Somalis and foreigners who are being held for ransom, and call for their unconditional release. I appeal to all those, Somalis and non-Somalis alike, who can help, directly or indirectly, to do so by telephone, e-mail and every other means of making contact in order to help free the unfortunate hostages. It is impossible to see how such inhuman actions could help Somalis or the image of Somalia in any way. Likewise, I condemn the looting of United Nations offices in south-central Somalia, as well as efforts to silence the media through intimidation, extortion and the targeted killing of journalists.

The question of justice must be seriously addressed. Fighting impunity and various abuses against civilians should remain high on the agenda. In this regard, the international community should help the Somalis decide the way forward. This is why my Office is organizing a meeting on that issue towards the middle of next month. Moreover, the Monitoring Group based in Nairobi is active in trying to identify those who might face sanctions.

Before I conclude, allow me to stress that past failures should not discourage us from taking future action to promote stability. In the short and medium term, there are concrete steps that can be taken by this Council.

First, while the Government has made important strides, it still requires immediate support, political and financial, to improve the situation. The authorities in Puntland and Somaliland also need resources to ensure that stability endures.

Secondly, immediate and concrete support must be extended to the African Union Mission in Somalia. The African Union troops have shown remarkable courage and dedication, in solidarity with the Somali people. They deserve the backing of all Council members.

Thirdly, support for the subregional organization IGAD and the African Union in their decisions on Somalia would be most helpful. Given their proximity to, knowledge of and interest in Somalia, IGAD member States should be recognized as having a leading role on Somali issues.

Fourthly, the time has come for the United Nations to show that it is serious about moving to Somalia. Our temporary presence in Nairobi has lasted 15 years, which is far too long. We can work effectively for peace with the Somalis and address pressing humanitarian needs only if we are close to the victims of famine, violence and myriad abuses. My Office and other leading United Nations agencies, including humanitarian ones, along with concerned diplomats and non-governmental organizations, should move to Mogadishu. The establishment of a green zone, similar to those elsewhere, would facilitate this process.

Fifthly, we must continue to provide support against piracy. The international maritime presence has been a remarkable show of solidarity with Somalis on the part of a large number of nations, and has been effective. The maritime presence should continue,

while support for the establishment of a Somali coastguard is being provided. At the same time, the question of addressing the problems on land, particularly the issue of youth employment, must been taken up as a matter of urgency.

Somalia is indeed a very difficult case, to say the least, but challenges always arise and should not be a reason for inaction. The international community should never surrender its obligation towards the people of Somalia. Effective action is needed now because, if not now, when? If the Council does not act, then who will? We know all too well that all that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.

People all over the world strive for peace, security and dignity. The people of Somalia are no exception. They have been denied this modest aspiration for the past 20 years. Last year's Security Council visit to Djibouti was a tremendous boost to the region. If the Council can help to restore stability to Somalia, that would go a long way towards elevating further the United Nations reputation in Africa. It seems to me that now is the time for action.

The President: I thank Mr. Ould Abdallah for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Lamamra.

Mr. Lamamra (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank you, Sir, and the other members of the Council for this opportunity to report on the African Union Commission's assessment of the situation in and prospects for Somalia. I particularly appreciate the privilege of participating in the Security Council's consideration of this item under your presidency, Sir. Your personal commitment and Uganda's invaluable contribution to peace and reconciliation in Somalia are recognized and praised here and everywhere.

The situation in Somalia is difficult and volatile, but it is neither desperate nor insurmountable. In the few months since the unity Government, headed by President Sheikh Sharif Sheik Ahmed, has been in existence and functioning, we have seen marked improvements in the country's governance. These improvements reflect a drive for transparency, inclusiveness and responsiveness to the expectations of a people who have been sorely tried by years without a State and by fratricidal hostilities.

The Transitional Federal Institutions, representing broad political movements, have undertaken to work in Somalia to create positive momentum towards a resolution of the crisis. But anti-peace forces inside and outside Somalia have redoubled their violent efforts to destroy the achievements of the peace and national reconciliation processes, supported by Africa and the entire international community as a precious opportunity for Somalia. These forces are working relentlessly to ensure that Somalia is inescapably associated with terrorism, piracy, endemic instability and threats to itself as well as to neighbours near and far.

The African Union's governing bodies, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government and the Peace and Security Council, have assumed and reaffirmed action-oriented positions in line with all the recommendations put forward by the political leaders of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. These positions and recommendations are well known to the Council and I will not repeat them here. I would, however, like to articulate three key ideas that I feel should be seen as essential by the international community, assuming that failure in Somalia is not an option and that now more than ever is the time for boldness and increased commitment.

First, the strategic stakes of the situation, in their direct impact on international peace and security, ensure that the Somali conflict cannot be dismissed as a simple civil war fed by general dissatisfaction with the distribution of power and wealth in the country. Somalia has become a source of insecurity at a regional level and beyond.

Secondly, the increase, since 12 May 2009, in acts of armed violence against the Transitional Federal Institutions, the nascent National Security Force and the Somali police in Mogadishu is aimed not only at bringing about an unconstitutional change of Government, but at making Somalia a lasting trouble spot and a base of operations for extremist activities that challenge the region and the world as a whole.

Thirdly, the fight waged in legitimate self-defence by the Somali Government and the forces supporting President Sheikh Sharif Sheik Ahmed, on the one hand, and the stabilization work carried out by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), on the other, together form a coherent resistance to a global threat and are helping to defeat it.

Taking these considerations into account, we feel that it is in the natural order of things that the international community, mobilized in solidarity and faced with the challenges that the anti-peace forces in Somalia pose to its core values, should decide on and implement bold and innovative measures. Beyond the ongoing strengthening of AMISOM and the expeditious build-up of the Somali National Security Force, it is important that Somalia's air space and territorial waters not be open to the free passage of weapons, munitions and foreign combatants.

It is equally important that the struggle not be waged only where the anti-peace forces take the initiative, in this case the capital, Mogadishu, which is being increasingly emptied of its civilian population. The authority of the State and of the Government of President Ahmed should be gradually extended to other parts of the country, beginning with those presenting distinctive characteristics in operational as well as strategic terms, and indeed in spiritual and symbolic terms, too.

The African Union and the United Nations are developing a lasting partnership in Somalia that heralds a qualitative step forward in the design of peacekeeping operations whose objective aims determine their form and composition. The deployment of a sixth battalion, from Burundi, with Algerian air assets and the establishment of a United Nations logistics support module, are further encouraging developments.

The conditions are thus gradually being created to enable the United Nations to assume directly the large share of responsibilities that naturally fall to it in asserting the presence of the international community in Somalia, including taking over from a fully operational AMISOM. From this standpoint, upgrading the level and effectiveness of regional and international institutions' representation in Somalia would be a timely step in the right direction.

The African Union, which welcomes the promising work it is doing in Somalia with the United Nations and the team headed by Special Representative Ould Abdallah, alongside the Department of Field Support, as well as the valuable assistance of its international partners, expresses the hope that this struggle for peace will be crowned with the success it deserves.

The President: I thank Mr. Lamamra for his statement.

I now give the floor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Somalia.

Mr. Omaar (Somalia): First and foremost, Mr. President, I thank you for this opportunity to participate in this discussion on Somalia. I also wish to take this occasion to pay tribute to the Secretary-General and my good friend Ambassador Ould Abdallah for all the efforts and energy he has brought to bear on the situation, and for his leadership over the past two years and more. In the same spirit, I also wish to pay tribute to and to thank the agencies of the United Nations and the international community for their continuing stance, shoulder to shoulder, with the Somali people.

However, as has been said — and we all agree — the issues and the problems of Somalia have to be solved by Somalis. The responsibility lies not only with the Government but with the people of Somalia, wherever they are. The international community has come to our assistance, which we appreciate. I believe we have now assumed the tasks and responsibility for the needs of our country.

What is also clear, we believe, is that the Somali people and the international community have come to a decision that the continuous reinvention of the wheel in the repeated conferences that have taken place in the past has now come to an end. Now is the moment to rebuild an institutional base and an operational State that will bring stability to Somalia. I think that is a very important decision. In partnership, we are now of like minds that this has to work and be put in place so that the State can be rebuilt properly and Somalia can take its place in the international community.

As has been said, our commitment at the political level to peace and reconciliation is neither temporary nor in any way limited. We remain open, willing and ready to incorporate into the Djibouti peace process any and every party that agrees to the re-establishment of the rule of law and is willing to sit across the negotiating table to deliberate on and find a way forward. I believe, as my good friend Ambassador Ould Abdallah has said, that proof of that is the recent agreement with Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a as a new partner in the reconstruction of Somalia.

Similar efforts are taking place within the country as well as within the diaspora Somali community across the world. That dialogue is continuous and will be maintained and sustained. We are committed to

peace and reconciliation as an ongoing process that does not have a time limit.

At the international level, we are very grateful for the support and the position of the African Union and the recent summit held in Libya, which fully took on board the political, diplomatic, military and financial needs of Somalia. We are also grateful for the endorsement by the African Union summit of the proposals that the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Somali Government have put to it. That was followed by an IGAD ministerial meeting, which again concluded that, aside from the actions of the Security Council and the United Nations, we in IGAD need to act on a subregional basis. IGAD has also now adopted resolutions and decisions that establish local sanctions on a subregional basis to confront the issue of individuals and entities in IGAD countries that are spoilers of the peace process.

But what has become clear is that, on the military side, the objective of the past two months has been to overthrow the Government, which was the basis of the initial attack in April. That project of Al-Shabaab and Hizbul Islam has now run out of steam. It has now been concluded, on our side and on their side, that that project to seize power and overthrow the Government cannot and will not come to fruition. It will not succeed as a military operation. That has resulted in a change of tactics, which we first saw in the hostage-taking that has taken place not only in Mogadishu but also in the Northern Frontier District of Kenya, as well as in the impact of the abuse of the institutions and facilities of the United Nations itself. Over and beyond that, we expect that an expanded project of suicide bombings will be undertaken and will come to pass as another tactic of terrorism seeking to destabilize not only the Somali Government but also the international community, which is coming to the aid of Somalia.

In conclusion, our request to the Council is that it view Somalia within the subregional context. The subregion as a whole has been through a 50-year cycle of war — from the Sudan to Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia. Our people have suffered 50 years of civil and inter-State wars — in effect, since the 1950s or early 1960s. We believe that Somalia is a key factor for the stability of the subregion. The peace that we seek, and which we believe the Council seeks, is not limited only to Somalia. The peace that we want is subregional peace, and stability in Somalia is a cornerstone of that peace. What happens in Somalia will have an impact on neighbouring countries.

Therefore, the project and partnership that has been established between the international community and the Somali Government and people must succeed, because the impact goes far beyond the borders of Somalia. I believe that the proof of that is the piracy that we have experienced in the past few years. We therefore ask for the Council's assistance and support. The crucial issue now is that of external vested interests that wish to sustain and continue the war in Somalia. I think Somalis are of the mind that we can achieve peace and reconciliation if we can overcome the issue of external interference and external vested interests that wish to sustain the war. I promise the Council that the Government can find a peace and reconciliation process that can be completed among Somalis, if we are given the opportunity and the external door can be closed.

The President: I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Quarrey (United Kingdom): We are grateful to Foreign Minister Omaar, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ould Abdallah and Commissioner Lamamra for their briefings this morning.

It is right that the Security Council remain focused on the situation in Somalia. As we have said before, instability there poses a clear threat to peace and security in the region and beyond. The ongoing violence continues to cause deep and unnecessary suffering for a people who have, as we have heard from each of the briefers this morning, suffered too long already.

Three weeks ago, Ambassador Sawers set out what the United Kingdom sees as the four priority areas for action in addressing the situation in Somalia. The first priority area is to tackle the humanitarian crisis, helping the more than 3 million people in need by supporting the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in delivering basic security, food and health care. The second priority area is to support the political process, specifically the TFG's reconciliation policy, and to build on the Djibouti peace process. The third priority area is to achieve an improved security situation in Mogadishu, working with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the TFG to expand the authority of the latter. The fourth priority

area is to address the ongoing threat from piracy. We need to continue to work to ensure security on Somalia's seas, as well as on land, by tackling both piracy and its root causes.

What we have heard today from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ould Abdallah, Commissioner Lamamra, and Minister for Foreign Affairs Omaar confirms that those are the right priorities. As they have made clear, the situation remains extremely fragile.

We are encouraged to hear that progress is being made by the TFG and President Ahmed. We welcome the fact that the Joint Security Committee met in Mogadishu last week for the first time. The Committee should play a key role in ensuring a properly coordinated relationship between those involved in security in Mogadishu.

The long-term solution to Somalia's security, however, remains the development of the Somali security forces. The United Nations Development Programme has done admirable work in training the police, but there is still much to be done to strengthen the joint security forces. Member States must continue to focus on what support can be delivered in this sector.

While the security situation remains fragile, the role of AMISOM in supporting the TFG remains essential. We pay tribute once again to the Governments of Uganda and Burundi for their continuing commitment, and encourage other African Union member States to play a role.

Improved security should create the space for development. We must take advantage of stability in the areas controlled by the TFG to show that it can deliver essential services and economic benefits to the Somali people. To this end, we encourage the TFG to set out its needs and the United Nations and the international community to respond accordingly.

Finally, we look forward to hearing Ambassador Heller's report later this morning on the work of the sanctions Committee. The Monitoring Group's report sets out clear evidence that individuals and entities are actively supporting and arming opposition groups and seeking to undermine the TFG. Halting the illegal flow of weapons and ammunition to rebel groups in Somalia is an essential part of supporting the TFG and the peace process. The Council should act quickly and decisively in agreeing measures against those working against peace in Somalia.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah for his very valuable briefing and his great efforts to help the Somali people solve their problems and restore peace in the country. I would also like to thank Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, for his comprehensive briefing on the Union's position on this issue. I would also like to welcome Mr. Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, and thank him for his statement.

My country is very concerned about the use of force and violence to overthrow the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Somalia at a time when the Government has tirelessly sought to reach out to the armed opposition groups and convince them to renounce violence and participate in the Government. It has held consultations with the leaders of tribes, sheikhs and religious leaders, and made tangible progress in the transition process. Its actions have been welcomed by the Somali people.

The international community should step up its financial and political support for the Government of President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed so that it can extend its authority over the entire territory of the country. We also welcome the commitment of the Government of the Somali President to establish a broad-based administration in accordance with the agreement signed with Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a and some elements of Hizbul Islam.

We express our concern over reports of the presence of foreign elements in the armed opposition groups. These elements are seeking to further their own objectives and agendas, and their presence will prolong the conflict in the country.

We call on the international community to respond to the appeals launched by the African Union at its meeting in Sirte early this month for the implementation of the commitments undertaken at the Doha conference, and by the International Contact Group at its meetings in Brussels and Rome for support to the Somali Government. We call on States that are able to do so to support and promote the African Union Mission in Somalia through the Trust Fund and to support African States that are willing to provide

troops so that the Mission can reach its authorized strength of 8,000 as quickly as possible.

I must point out here that the Governments of Uganda and Burundi are to be commended for the unflagging sacrifices they have made to bring security and peace to the Somali people. We hope that they will accelerate the process to transform the African Union Mission in Somalia into a United Nations Mission in Somalia.

With respect to piracy off the Somali coast, we would like to express our gratitude to the States Members of the United Nations and the regional organizations that have undertaken to protect ships and helped the World Food Programme, the United Nations and humanitarian institutions and agencies to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need. At the same time, we believe that addressing the issue of piracy in the long term will require a comprehensive approach that seeks to end the conflict, restore stability, support the ability of the Somali Government to extend its authority over the entire territory, including its coasts, and exploit and protect sustainable sources of income, particularly living marine resources, which for many years have been exposed to plunder by foreign companies through illegal fishing in Somali territorial waters.

At the humanitarian level, we note that intensifying acts of violence over the past three months have led to the very serious deterioration of the humanitarian situation. At least 250 civilians have been killed, hundreds injured and 204,000 displaced from the capital, Mogadishu. The number of persons emigrating to Yemen or otherwise becoming refugees during the first quarter of this year rose by 30 per cent compared to the first quarter of last year.

We call on all States to continue to support humanitarian assistance and reconstruction priority programmes. In this context, we recall that the World Food Programme still needs $136 million to feed more than 3 million individuals in all parts of Somalia. We hope that the international community will provide the necessary contributions to that end. In that connection, we commend the efforts of those providing humanitarian assistance, who are carrying out their responsibilities in an environment increasingly fraught with risk.

Finally, we are very concerned at the information contained in the report regarding the recruitment of children younger than 18 and their use in armed confrontations. We call on those responsible to put an end to that practice and to permit those children to return to their families as soon as possible.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, for his briefing on the situation in Somalia. While we understand his hopes for positive developments in that situation, the overall picture is extremely alarming. We listened closely to the statements made by African Union Commissioner Lamamra and Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia.

We are gravely concerned at the ongoing instability in Somalia, including widespread attacks, killings and other acts of violence, as well as illegal acts committed against United Nations facilities in the country. The continuing attacks against the positions of Government forces and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) are intended to undermine the efforts of the Transitional Federal Government to effectively govern the country. Under these circumstances, there is a need to mobilize the efforts of Somalis themselves as well as those of the international community to strengthen the central Government's capacities, particularly in the area of security.

Unfortunately, as the security situation remains totally unacceptable and unsatisfactory, it is now difficult to talk realistically about the possibility of expanding the United Nations presence on the ground in Somalia. We must all strive towards that goal, but the key factor is to ensure appropriate security conditions.

There is no alternative to sustainable peace and national reconciliation in Somalia on the basis of the Djibouti peace process. We continue to support the efforts of President Ahmed and the Government to that end. We believe that providing broad support for the Somali Government by assisting the countries of the African Union will lay the foundation necessary for the long-term recovery and rehabilitation in Somalia. We call on all countries in the region to provide all forms of assistance to Somalia and not to allow foreign mercenaries, combatants or weapons to be brought into the country, in violation of the sanctions regime established by the Security Council.

We commend the role played by the African Union Mission in bringing about stability, strengthening the security sector and helping to promote the political process. The Mission's activities are extremely important, and we believe that it must have adequate staffing, equipment and other types of support.

We agree with the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General regarding the deterioration in the humanitarian and human rights situation, in particular with regard to the most vulnerable groups in the population. Assistance to Somalia must be comprehensive and must encompass socio-economic development. Here, the most important tasks are ensuring sustainable economic recovery and resolving the problem of unemployment. However, I must reiterate once again that none of these tasks can be carried out satisfactorily without a reliable stabilization of the security situation, which is key to resolving all the political, socio-economic and humanitarian problems in Somalia.

We cannot but agree with the assessments made in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/373) and by Mr. Ould Abdallah with regard to the ongoing destabilizing factor of piracy off the coast of Somalia. We note the robust efforts to ensure security off the coast and to provide assistance to the coastguard. Another important task is creating the legal infrastructure necessary for the prosecution of persons involved in piracy. Here, assistance by legal institutions in neighbouring countries could play a very important role. Because the current conditions in Somalia make it impossible to eradicate this phenomenon, international cooperation must be intensified to combat piracy and eradicate its infrastructure and its sources of financial support.

Russia will continue to take an active part in international anti-piracy cooperation and in the overall effort to assist in the long-term stabilization of Somalia.

Mr. Somdah (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): Permit me at the outset to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia and to thank him for his statement. I also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, and African Union Commissioner Lamamra for their briefings, which provided updated information on the Djibouti peace process and the difficult security situation on the ground in Somalia.

At the political level, my delegation welcomes the continuing activities of the Government and the parliament in Mogadishu despite the difficult security situation, as well as the Government's ongoing policy of openness, demonstrated by the visits made by President Ahmed. We reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of the Djibouti agreement, which is the only framework for a political settlement of the Somali crisis. We commend the efforts of the Transitional Federal Government to establish contacts with opposition groups that are not yet part of the Djibouti reconciliation process.

In particular, we welcome the signing on 21 June of a declaration of political, security, humanitarian and development cooperation with the group Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a. Burkina Faso believes that that is the most significant success of the policy of inclusive dialogue pursued by President Ahmed since his election. That is why we encourage the Government to continue the consultations begun with influential clan leaders, elders and clerics in order to expand the base of support for the stabilization of Somalia.

With respect to security, Burkina Faso once again firmly condemns targeted killings and attacks against Government forces by illegal armed groups supported by foreign elements. These attacks, which began in early May, have already claimed many civilian victims and have included the killing of the Minister of the Interior; they must cease immediately. We call on all States of the region, without exception, to scrupulously respect the arms embargo and to refrain from providing military, logistical or any other kind of support to illegal armed groups that are active in Somalia, as required by the relevant resolutions and statements of the Security Council. Moreover, we are very concerned by reports that the group Al-Shabaab continues to enlist young people and children for combat.

Burkina Faso reaffirms its unreserved support for the Government of President Ahmed as the legitimate Somali authority. We also reaffirm our support for the position adopted by the African Union (AU) and the appeal contained in the AU Peace and Security Council communiqué of 15 June 2009, which was confirmed in a decision by the African Union Conference of Heads of State and Government held from 1 to 3 July 2009. In particular, we think that the request that a no-fly zone be imposed around certain airports merits immediate follow-up.

My delegation would like to thank the Secretariat for its support and its ongoing solidarity with the people and the Government of Somalia and encourages it to continue its support for development and for institutional capacity-building in the country. We thank in particular Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, who continues in spite of difficulties to show unequalled determination and commitment.

We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the confirmation of a significant portion of the $213 million pledged during the international donors conference held in Brussels on 22 and 23 April 2009. The start of training for new Somali police officers, which was undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme on the basis of those pledges, is encouraging. We hope that this activity will be continued and expanded in accordance with the programme that has been planned.

However, at this stage, my delegation would like to reiterate its position that the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation seems to be the only option — and that of last resort — for stabilizing Somalia. Until the Security Council takes a stand on this option, my delegation encourages the Secretariat to continue its support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), in accordance with resolutions 1863 (2009) and 1872 (2009).

We thank Uganda and Burundi for their significant ongoing efforts, and, given the seriousness of this situation, we invite the countries that have already promised troops for AMISOM to fulfil their promises as quickly as possible in order to strengthen the African force. Burkina Faso reaffirms its firm commitment to the integrity and security of the African force and thus firmly condemns any attack against AMISOM.

Finally, Burkina Faso believes in a return to peace and stability in Somalia and invites the international community to maintain and to strengthen its support for that country in accordance with the recommendations of the African Union and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development.

Mr. Wolff (United States of America): Let me first thank Special Representative Ould Abdallah for his informative update on the situation in Somalia and for his critical work of monitoring and reporting under often dangerous conditions. Let me also welcome Foreign Minister Omaar and African Union Commissioner Lamamra back to the Council and thank them for their informative statements.

The United States condemns in the strongest terms the continuing military offensives against the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia, which are designed to overthrow the TFG's legitimate authority by force. The United States particularly condemns the 19 July raids by Al-Shabaab on — and forced closure of — the offices of the United Nations Development Programme, the Department of Safety and Security and the United Nations Political Office for Somalia in Wajid and Baidoa, during which communications equipment, automobiles and supplies were looted, as well as its 17 May raid on the UNICEF compound in Jowhar town; the compound remains occupied by the militia.

We are very concerned by reports that Al-Shabaab is recruiting seasoned fighters from abroad and collaborating with Al-Qaida to remove the TFG. Al-Shabaab and other extremists have ratcheted up bomb attacks and targeted assassinations to spread fear in an attempt to intimidate the Somali people into submission. There are troublesome reports not only of recent violence by extremists in Mogadishu but also of renewed fighting in the central regions of Somalia. And in its drive to forcibly gain power, Al-Shabaab has even recruited Somali children to take up arms.

We second the Special Representative's call to donors for urgent military and financial support to the TFG and AMISOM. Supporting AMISOM should be central to the international community's strategy of stabilizing Mogadishu and supporting the Somali peace process. We thank AMISOM for its brave and critical work in the face of continuing danger, and my Government urges donors to fulfil the pledges made at the April security conference in Brussels to address the continuing threat to regional stability posed by extremists.

Currently, AMISOM is four battalions short of its mandated strength of nine infantry battalions, or a little over half of its mandated strength of 8,000 troops. The United States welcomes the pledges made by Sierra Leone and Malawi to contribute one battalion each to AMISOM and thanks Uganda and Burundi for their roles, in particular Burundi for the steps it is taking to contribute a third battalion to help strengthen AMISOM's capacity.

We are deeply concerned about the worsening humanitarian situation in Somalia, including that of the estimated 200,000 people who had recently returned to Mogadishu only to again be displaced when the fighting began anew. The violence makes distributing critical food and other humanitarian assistance to the 3.2 million Somalis who require it more challenging and sometimes impossible.

The United States deplores violence against humanitarian agencies and staff, in particular Al-Shabaab's 17 May raid on the UNICEF compound, which resulted in the destruction of thousands of doses of vaccines intended for Somali women and children and nutritional supplements intended for the most vulnerable women and children.

The United States is committed to addressing the humanitarian situation and has provided nearly $149 million in food and non-food emergency assistance since the start of our current fiscal year. We urge the international community to contribute to the consolidated appeal for Somalia, which, as of 30 June, covers only 40 per cent of the $984 million requested.

In spite of these challenges, the United States is encouraged by President Sharif's continuing efforts to reach out to opposition groups that wish to join the national reconciliation process, and we welcome the TFG's declaration of cooperation with the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a. We also welcome the TFG's institution-building efforts and the steps taken to hold parliamentary and cabinet sessions despite increasing attacks in Mogadishu.

On piracy, we are concerned by reports from the International Maritime Bureau of an exponential increase in activity as well as the reports of the use of more sophisticated weapons. We must continue to prosecute suspected pirates, as piracy is without a question a symptom of, as well as a contributing factor to, the instability and insecurity in Somalia. Without stability in Somalia, there can be no durable resolution of the piracy problem. Nonetheless, my Government believes that the paying of ransom simply perpetuates piracy. The United States does not offer concessions to hostage-takers, whether they are driven by political or financial motives, and we encourage other States to take a similar position.

Finally, we remain deeply concerned about Eritrea's actions in the region, particularly in Somalia. The Monitoring Group has noted in its reports that Eritrea has provided funding, weapons and training to armed insurgents in Somalia. Like others here, the United States has repeatedly stated that we remain willing to engage the Eritrean Government should it end its destabilizing activities in the Horn of Africa and take steps towards improved regional relations. Unfortunately, Eritrea has thus far refused these offers, and the window is rapidly closing.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): I should first like to thank Mr. Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing and for his patient efforts to bring peace and stability to Somalia under very difficult circumstances. We are also grateful for the briefing by Commissioner Lamamra and the important message he brought us from the African Union Commission. We are further grateful for the briefing by Mr. Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia. It is useful and helpful to have him here again to brief the members of the Council directly.

Austria wishes to reiterate its full support for the Djibouti peace process and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). We welcome the continued efforts to reach out to opposition groups. The Djibouti peace agreement constitutes the only viable and legitimate framework for achieving lasting peace in Somalia. We therefore urge all parties in Somalia to join the Djibouti process and its structures.

We condemn the attempts of extremists to overthrow the TFG and the raiding and looting of United Nations offices in Somalia. We are deeply worried by reports of support to the insurgents from outside Somalia, and wish once again to reiterate that, from our point of view, this is also an issue in which the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) can play an important role.

We note the deep concern expressed by the heads of State and Government of the African Union during their recent summit in Sirte concerning arms supplies to insurgent groups in Somalia. We believe that this is an issue to which the Council should give careful consideration.

We believe that three key elements are vital to the stabilization of the situation in Somalia: support to the TFG, support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and support to the reconciliation process. Uganda and Burundi, as countries contributing troops to AMISOM, are a crucial factor in restoring stability to Somalia. We are also grateful for the pledges that

have been made by other African countries, including Sierra Leone and Malawi. It would seem that the current mandate of AMISOM allows sufficient flexibility. However, AMISOM needs to reach its mandated strength, as well as better equipment.

In that context, on Monday members of the European Union, including Austria, agreed at the ministerial level to further step up the Union's engagement in Somalia. The European Union will increase its support to the TFG and AMISOM, and explore additional support for the security sector and regional maritime capabilities. An exploratory mission will be going to Somalia in the middle of August.

Concerning piracy off the coast of Somalia, Austria would like to underline that the efforts of a great number of international actors, including the European Union through its Operation Atalanta, to curb piracy off the Horn of Africa cannot meet with lasting success without addressing the root causes and the issue of accountability. We are very grateful for the efforts of the Secretariat and Under-Secretary-General O'Brien to deal with the issue of accountability.

We condemn the widespread violations and abuses by insurgents, extrajudicial and arbitrary executions, arrests and torture as practised by Al-Shabaab. We are particularly worried about reports of the use of civilians as human shields and of indiscriminate attacks that have led to numerous civilian casualties. As pointed out by the Secretary-General, these abuses might constitute war crimes, and those responsible must be held to account.

We condemn the recruitment of children by insurgent groups and demand their immediate release. In this regard, we would like to recall the conclusions concerning Somalia reached last year by the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. Among the recommendations presented in the conclusions, we would like specifically to highlight the encouragement to AMISOM and the United Nations Political Office for Somalia to incorporate child protection advisers into their staff, and to the TFG to consider ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

We are very concerned about the dramatic humanitarian situation in Somalia. We have seen a surge in the numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) over the past two months. More than 200,000 people have fled Mogadishu alone, increasing the number of IDPs in the country to over 1.2 million. We commend the United Nations intention to continue its work in Somalia, notwithstanding the difficulties that it has faced in very recent days.

I would ask the Special Representative to convey our expressions of support and esteem to his staff, to his partners outside the United Nations system, and to all those who dedicate their work to achieving stability, peace and security in Somalia.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I, too, would like to thank Mr. Ould Abdallah for his very helpful briefing this morning. I am also grateful to Mr. Lamamra and Mr. Omaar for their very useful statements.

I should like briefly to discuss four issues. First, Japan shares the serious concern about the fragile security situation as a result of continuing attacks against the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) by rebel groups, particularly since the Security Council took up the issue of Somalia earlier this month. A series of attacks have taken place, including violence against humanitarian workers, attacks on United Nations offices and abductions of French personnel. We strongly condemn these acts of violence and call for the immediate release of the hostages.

At the same time, we are heartened by the active efforts of the TFG to maintain security, including by regaining control over Beledweyne. Every possible support should be provided to the TFG. The ongoing efforts of the TFG to promote the political process are also commendable. We hope that opposition groups will follow the example of Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a and join in the Djibouti peace process.

Secondly, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) plays an indispensable role in support of the TFG in protecting Mogadishu and assisting the Government. It is essential to strengthen the activities of AMISOM. We are grateful to the troop-contributing countries Burundi and Uganda for their contributions. We should extend every support to build up AMISOM to the full troop level of 8,000. We therefore sincerely hope that the pledges of additional troops by several countries will materialize as early as possible. However, it has been a major challenge in the current security situation to deliver the logistical support package to AMISOM in a timely fashion. We commend the untiring efforts of the Secretariat, particularly the

Department of Field Support, and urge that these good efforts be continued.

The international community must enhance its support to the TFG. The instability in Somalia is caused by internal as well as external factors. It is essential to cut off external military and economic assistance to the rebel groups. The countries in the region need to come together to assist the TFG.

The Somalia sanctions Committee is currently engaged in appropriate measures to implement resolution 1844 (2008). It is our belief that the effectiveness of these measures must be carefully considered. We are ready to take part in the discussion in the Committee to determine the most appropriate course of action.

My third point concerns the capacity-building of the TFG. Building the capacity of the Somali security forces and police is critically important, particularly in the northern and north-eastern regions, where the security situation is relatively calm. The effort to define the Somali national security strategy should be further promoted with the support of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS).

Japan welcomes international support for the programme to recruit and train 10,000 Somalia Police Force personnel by June 2010. The programme needs to be implemented through strong coordination among UNPOS, the United Nations Development Programme and AMISOM. Most importantly, however, coordination among donor countries is essential. Japan, for its part, will disburse $9 million to the Trust Fund for AMISOM, through which we support the training of the Somalia Police Force.

My fourth point concerns piracy. Piracy continues to pose a threat to the stability in the region and to orderly international commerce. The ongoing concerted efforts of the international community are absolutely essential to addressing piracy off the coast of Somalia. Japan has been actively engaged in such efforts by providing two destroyers and two P-3C maritime patrol aircraft. In our Parliament, a new law has been enacted on the penalization of acts of piracy and measures against acts of piracy. Through that effort, we can now protect foreign vessels.

It is Japan's turn to chair the fourth plenary meeting of the Contact Group on Somali Piracy on 10 September here at Headquarters. A longer-term solution will require restoring stability and governance on land in Somalia. Measures on land are therefore important from that point of view. Japan welcomes the discussion that is now under way to establish a working group, within the Contact Group framework, on land-based issues. The programme of the United Nations country team and UNPOS to establish a framework document to improve standards of living along the coast and in the hinterland of Somalia are also useful for the purpose of combating piracy. Japan has provided assistance to those programmes. We hope that the coordinated efforts of the international community will also have a positive influence on the security situation on land.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank Mr. Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing, and Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, and Ambassador Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, for their presentations.

First of all, I would like briefly to comment on the situation that has been described. As Minister Omaar pointed out, it is now clear that the radical groups cannot overthrow the Government militarily, but that they are continuing their attacks nevertheless and creating a very detrimental situation of insecurity and violence.

My delegation notes with concern that, since the attack of the rebel groups on 7 May, fighting is continuing in the countryside and in Mogadishu. The day before yesterday seven civilians were killed in the capital, Al-Shabaab fired a mortar at a parliament session, and foreign fighters continue to fight within the ranks of the fundamentalists. Of course, every day that the situation continues, the suffering of the population increases. Over 3 million people now depend on humanitarian aid, while the attacks launched by Al-Shabaab on United Nations agencies, which we strongly condemn, are hampering United Nations activity. Moreover, more and more people who have lost hope are trying to reach Yemen across the Gulf of Aden aboard smugglers' boats. Since the beginning of the year, 30,000 people have succeeded and, unfortunately, 300 have died in that attempt.

In that context, as many speakers before me have said, the international community has a very important

role to play in helping the Transitional Federal Government to change the situation in its favour. The promises made in April at the Brussels conference must be kept. I recall that the European Commission is to provide €60 million to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and €13 million to the Rule of Law and Security Programme. We have taken careful note of the information in the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/373) on the logistic support package to AMISOM. It is of course essential that we give the soldiers our full support and remain mindful of their needs.

More specifically, my delegation has identified four tracks for action by the international community. First, extending concrete support to the Somali National Security Force is essential. This very morning, France began to train Somali troops, chosen by the Transitional Federal Government, in Djibouti. Djibouti, for its part, is doing the same. The European Union is considering the possibility of establishing a security force. At the most recent meeting of their General Affairs and External Relations Council, the ministers for foreign affairs of the European Union decided to send an exploratory mission to the region in August.

Secondly, it is vital that we maintain and strengthen our support to AMISOM, and my delegation pays tribute to the action of Uganda and Burundi in that regard. For its part, France contributed to establishing four of the AMISOM contingents that, in a recent sortie, demonstrated their ability to help the Transitional Federal Government not only to hold its positions, but to push back the extremist fighters. We welcome the prospect of the imminent deployment of a sixth battalion, provided by Burundi.

Thirdly, my delegation encourages the United Nations to continue, as it is bravely doing, its assistance activities, in spite of the dangers. The European Union has extended Operation Atalanta by a year. Counter-piracy operations are crucial, particularly to protect the World Food Programme convoys, and we would not underestimate the risk that the attacks may resume in strength once the weather is again favourable to the pirates. I recall that, at the most recent meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council, the European Union reiterated its willingness to develop a comprehensive approach towards Somalia in which the fight against piracy is an important component.

Lastly, I would like to underscore the importance of the political dialogue. The Transitional Federal Government signed a reconciliation agreement with the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a group a month ago. I am delighted by the spirit of openness shown by Minister Omaar in his statement, and France encourages the Transitional Federal Government to continue in that direction.

I would now like to turn briefly to the issue of sanctions. France has begun to actively engage in the discussions taking place within the Somali sanctions committee. We are convinced that, under resolution 1844 (2008), the Security Council can provide a clear, realistic and effective response to the situation in the Horn of Africa. However, we must also take fully into account the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea.

In conclusion, I wish to reassure the Special Representative of the Secretary-General that we fully support his efforts and that, in this delicate situation, his role as coordinator of the activities of the United Nations and the international community is as necessary as ever. Naturally, we support the action of the African Union and welcome the involvement of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): I, too, would like to thank Mr. Ould Abdallah for his briefing. I welcome the participation in the Council's meeting today of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, and I thank them for their presentations.

My delegation is pleased to note the political progress achieved under the Djibouti agreement, as reflected in the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2009/373). We commend and support the continued efforts undertaken by President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed to encourage the parties that are still outside the Djibouti agreement to join the national reconciliation process to rebuild their war-torn country. We urge all groups that have yet to lay down their arms and join the peace and reconciliation process to do so.

Despite those encouraging political developments, the security situation in Somalia remains deeply troubling. Attacks by insurgent groups, most notably Al-Shabaab, against the Transitional Federal Government and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in and around Mogadishu have intensified.

We strongly condemn the attempts by those groups to overthrow the legally constituted and internationally recognized Government by force and their recent attacks against the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security and the United Nations Political Office for Somalia.

We are particularly concerned about the extremely alarming humanitarian situation in Somalia, with over 1 million people internally displaced and more than 3 million on the verge of starvation.

As the continued fighting has worsened the humanitarian crisis, there is an urgent need for immediate and vigorous international support for the TFG's endeavours to repel the onslaught of the extremist forces that are intent on destroying the Djibouti peace process and spoiling efforts to bring peace and stability to Somalia through political reconciliation.

My delegation supports the Secretary-General's call for Member States and regional organizations to expedite contributions to the United Nations trust funds as well as the bilateral support pledged at the Brussels donors conference, in order to provide the TFG with sufficient assistance to rebuild Somalia's security institutions and train its security forces.

We support the strengthening of AMISOM to enable it to withstand insurgent attacks. We greatly appreciate the efforts made by the Governments of Uganda and Burundi in contributing to the maintenance of security in Mogadishu, and we note with pleasure that some other African Union countries have pledged to contribute troops to AMISOM.

Significant progress has been achieved by the international community in addressing the problem of piracy off the coast of Somalia. The cooperation and coordination exhibited by Member States in the fight against piracy in the region is proving effective. However, we still believe that, in the long run, the scourge of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia will be resolved thoroughly only through an integrated approach that addresses the conflict, the lack of governance and the absence of sustainable livelihoods on land in Somalia.

Stabilizing Somalia and delivering a negotiated peace settlement that addresses the root causes of the conflict requires closer cooperation and a more effective partnership among the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, the African Union and the League of Arab States in addressing the challenges that confront Somalia and bringing about lasting peace and security in the region. We continue to support a strong role for the United Nations in strengthening this cooperation and partnership, with a view to assisting the Government and the people of Somalia in bringing peace, security and stability to their country. We could not agree more with what has been said by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Somalia: that, ultimately, the issues facing Somalia will have to be resolved by Somalis.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking Mr. Ould Abdallah for his briefing, and I thank the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Mr. Lamamra, for his statement. I also welcome the statement made by the Somali Foreign Minister.

This Council has of late been reviewing the situation in Somalia and the challenges facing the Transitional Federal Government and the international community there. We voice our concern at the resurgence of violence in Somalia and the consequent worsening of the humanitarian situation, the growing numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons and the climate of instability in the region. This urgent situation demands the strengthening of Somalia's security institutions and of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which are essential components in the stabilization of the country.

The international community must fulfil the commitments made at the Brussels donors conference and contribute to the United Nations trust fund set up for this purpose. Indifference on the part of the international community will only strengthen the position of the rebel groups, which, as the report of the Monitoring Group states, are already benefiting from arms flows and financial support from other countries, including countries of the region, which are seeking to undermine international peace and security.

We understand that the situation in Somalia can only be improved on the basis of action by the Somalis themselves. We reaffirm our support for the Transitional Federal Government and for its efforts to promote national reconciliation through inclusive negotiations within the Djibouti peace process. We also

salute Special Representative Ould Abdallah for his determined endeavours to move the political process forward.

We also welcome the recent decision of the African Union to bring the military and police components of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) up to the mandated number of personnel. We acknowledge the contributions of the Governments of Burundi and Uganda to the Mission and welcome the pledges of additional battalions from Sierra Leone and Malawi.

The worsening humanitarian situation in Somalia is a cause of great concern to my delegation. We condemn the attacks on civilian populations, as well as the obstacles placed in the way of free access to humanitarian assistance for the more than 3 million people who depend on it. An area of special concern for Costa Rica is the situation of the thousands of children who are victims of forcible recruitment by opposition rebel groups, as well as the killings and acts of mutilation and sexual and gender-based violence. The Security Council must remain vigilant with regard to these atrocious acts against the most defenceless populations in violation of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

My delegation has noted the progress made in combating piracy off the Somali coast, and we particularly welcome the impact of this progress on access to humanitarian assistance. We are, however, concerned by reports that the pirates are using increasingly sophisticated strategies in their attacks on vessels. It is therefore essential to work immediately to resolve problems of logistics and of bringing to justice the pirates that are still operating, while we work to strengthen the Somali State and thus to eliminate the causes that fuel piracy.

Finally, Costa Rica reaffirms its support for the Secretary-General's political strategy for Somalia, with its three-stage approach to attain the goals needed to achieve security in the country. We look forward to seeing soon the results of the assistance provided by the United Nations Political Office for Somalia to the Transitional Federal Government, especially in the development of a national security strategy.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the valuable information provided by Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia. We appreciate his commendable work and commitment in a very complex situation presenting a major challenge to the international community. We also welcome the presence and the message of Mr. Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union. And we welcome, too, the presence of Mr. Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia; we listened attentively to his message.

Mexico recognizes the significant efforts of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia as it works to stabilize the country. We also appreciate the work of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the commitment shown by the Governments of Uganda and Burundi in support of peace and the institutions of governance. We hope that the reinforcements announced by other members of the African Union will speedily complete the deployment of AMISOM, and that the conditions necessary for the achievement of the political, security and humanitarian goals of its mandate will be created.

In the face of the resurgence of confrontation in the capital between forces of the Transitional Federal Government and insurgent groups, Mexico reiterates that, in order to lay a foundation for sustainable peace, there must be simultaneous progress in three mutually reinforcing areas: the political sphere, security and development.

We acknowledge the political progress that has been made, in particular the interest of the Transitional Federal Government in seeking agreements with more moderate insurgent groups that remain outside the Djibouti reconciliation process. The fact that certain groups have jointed the peace process is a positive achievement. Another positive development, to which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General referred, was the recent signing of the joint declaration with one of those groups to cooperate on security, development, political and humanitarian issues.

Moreover, we support the steps taken by the Government of Somalia to develop the country, in particular the implementation, with the assistance of the African Union Mission in Somalia and the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, of the Transition Plan for Somalia in such areas as the strengthening of Somalia's National Security Force and police, as well as the efforts made with regard to transparency and accountability.

Mexico reiterates its great concern over the deterioration in security conditions for United Nations staff and humanitarian personnel, which has had a direct impact on the provision of assistance to the civilian population. It is unacceptable, that, confronted by violence, attacks and plundering, some funds, programmes and agencies, such as the World Food Programme and UNICEF, have found it necessary to suspend their work to distribute food and provide health services.

Mexico believes that it is essential to address the humanitarian situation and to reiterate the obligation of States always to observe and ensure respect for international humanitarian law, including their fundamental responsibility to take every step necessary to guarantee the protection of civilians. In that regard, it is essential to ensure the presence on the ground of the United Nations and humanitarian organizations. In the current circumstances, safe access and the delivery of humanitarian assistance are the only real option for meeting the most basic needs of the population, including internally displaced persons, refugees and, above all, members of the most vulnerable groups, such as women and children. We also call on the parties to the conflict to prevent and halt the recruitment of children.

Given the critical prevailing situation, it is a matter of priority, as we have learned from the briefings we have heard today, to establish minimal security conditions on the ground and to ensure an environment of sustainable security. Implementing the gradual approach that we endorsed in resolution 1872 (2009) depends, first and foremost, on safeguarding the survival of the current Government, the security of its leading officials and the continued and growing presence of the United Nations throughout the country. We are convinced that establishing a security zone on Somali territory and protecting strategic infrastructure, such as maritime ports, are essential steps in laying the foundations for the functioning of national institutions and the international presence. As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has rightly said, insecurity has now become a source of income and power.

In addition, we believe it important for the Security Council to take into account the African Union's call to establish a no-fly zone and a blockade of Somali ports to prevent the entry of foreign mercenaries and weapons into the country, as well as to consider appropriate measures with regard to Eritrea in order to address that country's support for insurgents, which contributes to Somalia's ongoing instability.

Acts of piracy have increased during 2009, including a total of 29 successful hijackings of vessels through the month of June. Mexico commends the decision of the Council of the European Union to expand the mandate of Operation Atalanta. We welcome the decision of NATO to expand its operations in the region. We also support the proposals of the Secretary-General to establish an additional working group within the Contact Group to consider ways to combat piracy on land, promote coordination of efforts between States and the Government of Somalia, and strengthen Somalia's coastguard capacity and its judicial system in order to prosecute alleged pirates.

Lastly, in its capacity as Chair of the Somalia Sanctions Committee, Mexico urges countries of the region and the entire international community to cooperate with the Committee's efforts with regard to the arms embargo and the political, logistical and financial support enjoyed by armed groups in Somalia. In that connection, we ask for resolute support and full cooperation with the Committee's monitoring group to enable it to fulfil its mandated functions. We trust that timely action by the Committee to implement resolution 1844 (2008) will become a fundamental component of a coordinated regional approach to creating the stability that the country so desperately needs.

Mr. Çorman (Turkey): We would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ould Abdallah, for his comprehensive briefing. We would also like to thank Foreign Minister of Somalia Mohamed Omaar and African Union Commissioner Lamamra for their statements. We also welcome the report (S/2009/373) of the Secretary-General.

Today's meeting on Somalia, the second in the month of July, is a testament to the importance that the Council attaches to developments in Somalia in particular, and to peace and stability in the Horn of Africa in general. Somalia is at a very delicate point. Developments on the ground have not yet reached the irreversible stage, insofar as the establishment of the authority of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in and around the capital is concerned.

We welcome the open-door policy pursued by the TFG vis-à-vis opposition groups. We should insist in our call to all groups in and outside Somalia that there

is no military solution to the Somali question and that the Djibouti peace process is the only road towards a peaceful future. Turkey fully supports the Transitional Federal Government as the only legitimate authority in Somalia. We reiterated that support to President Sheikh Sharif Sheik Ahmed during his visit to Turkey last April.

We commend the crucial role played by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and express our gratitude to the Governments of Uganda and Burundi for their invaluable contributions to the Mission. We encourage other African Union member States to follow suit. Undoubtedly, AMISOM's technical capacity should also be bolstered so that it can effectively implement its mandate. To that end, the expeditious deployment of the logistics support package by the United Nations will be vital.

Equally important is the early transfer of funds pledged to AMISOM at the Brussels donors' conference in April. I would like to say that Turkey has already transferred half of its pledge to AMISOM. The other part of our pledge, for the restructuring of the transitional security institutions in Somalia, has also been made available. As we have indicated on various occasions, Turkey is prepared to train AMISOM peacekeepers and Somali police officers in Turkey, in cooperation with the United Nations.

We welcome the recent meeting in Mogadishu of Somalia's Joint Security Committee. As Special Representative Ould Abdallah has said, the revitalization of the Committee marks an important step towards reforming and improving security in Somalia.

We are closely following the Secretariat's work on the plan for a future United Nations peacekeeping operation to follow AMISOM, subject to a further decision of the Security Council. In that regard, we look forward to the report of the Secretary-General to be issued in September 2009. We hope that the visit to Mogadishu by a team from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations takes place in advance of that report, as planned.

Turkey fully supports the three-track approach of the Secretary-General, as endorsed in resolution 1872 (2009).

We are also concerned about the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Somalia as a consequence of intensified fighting. It is alarming to learn from the report of the Secretary-General that some instances amount to war crimes under international humanitarian law. Here, the effective implementation of sanctions on Somalia and the importance of preventing the entry of foreign fighters into its territory come into the picture.

As for international efforts to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, I am pleased to report that Turkey's contribution to those efforts, with the provision of two frigates, continues. Moreover, we are actively taking part in the work of the International Contact Group on Somalia and are closely cooperating with countries of the region in that context.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): I too would like to join others in thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ould Abdallah, for presenting the most recent report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2009/373), which we welcome. I would also like to welcome African Union Commissioner Lamamra and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, Mr. Omaar, and to thank them for their presentations today. My delegation would also like to express its full appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia for his tireless efforts and his valuable contribution in promoting dialogue and reconciliation in Somalia.

Since we had an opportunity on 9 July to discuss the situation in Somalia (see S/PV.6158), my delegation would like to make a couple of brief points.

First, we note and express our concern about the ongoing dire security situation on the ground. In that context, we reiterate our full support for the Transitional Federal Government and President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed. We commend their determination and their action towards a more inclusive political process and genuine national reconciliation, and we welcome recent positive political developments in that respect, which have already been mentioned today.

We add our voice to the calls for all Somali stakeholders to opt for dialogue and to join the Djibouti peace process, which continues to be the best option for lasting peace in Somalia.

Secondly, we strongly condemn all attempts to halt the current political momentum, destabilize the Transitional Federal Institutions and undermine the Djibouti peace process. We call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and deplore the toll that

insurgent attacks have taken on both the civilian population and the already dire humanitarian situation in the country. Of particular concern to us was the extensive recruitment and training of children, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General. We echo the Secretary-General's call for the immediate cessation of such practices. Also, we urge all parties involved in the conflict to adhere to international humanitarian law and to respect human rights.

We also continue to be extremely concerned about reports of foreign interference with regard to insurgent attacks taking place in Somalia, as well as with the destabilizing potential of such actions for the whole region. We are therefore heartened by today's statement by Foreign Minister Omaar that, without foreign interference, the Transitional Federal Government would be able to ensure peace and security on the entire territory of Somalia.

As we have previously stated, we are ready to act in the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) on the basis of the reports presented by the Monitoring Group, whose work and findings we very much value and strongly support.

Thirdly, while appreciating the untiring efforts of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and its troop-contributing countries, we call for the strengthening of its capacities through fulfilment of troop-contributing pledges and bilateral aid, as well as through the Trust Fund for AMISOM. We also appreciate all efforts and initiatives aimed at improving the capacity of Somalia's security sector, in particular as an accountable and capable security and police force; this represents the backbone of achieving stability in the country.

Finally, we strongly support the work done thus far by all actors to tackle the issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia. Croatia is pleased to be able to make its contribution to the anti-piracy efforts and to participate actively in the European Union naval operation, Operation Atalanta.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish at the outset to thank Mr. Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, for his briefing. We highly appreciate Mr. Ould Abdallah's unremitting efforts over the years in drawing the attention of the international community to the need to resolve the question of Somalia. We welcome the statement by African Union Commissioner Lamamra. We also welcome the presence among us of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia and thank him for his statement.

We are deeply concerned about the current grave situation in Somalia. To resolve the question of Somalia, it is imperative to quickly stabilize the security situation in that country. For that purpose it is crucial importance to ensure that the Somali security forces are sufficiently strong. We welcome the recent Mogadishu meeting of the Joint Security Committee. We support the further strengthening of the Somali security forces and appeal to members of the international community that are able to provide support to Somalia to do so within the framework of the relevant procedures regarding exemptions from the sanctions.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is playing a very important role in the Somali peace process. Some African countries have pledged reinforcements to AMISOM; we welcome such pledges and look forward to the prompt and full deployment of the Mission. The international community must honour its commitments as soon as possible and provide even greater support to AMISOM. We support United Nations efforts to continue to deploy the AMISOM support package and request the Secretariat to complete the contingency planning for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

We support the continuation of national reconciliation talks among all Somali parties, aimed at consolidating the Djibouti peace process.

We condemn recent attacks against the Transitional Federal Government, civilians and humanitarian aid agencies and urge all Somali parties to immediately renounce the use of force and resolve all problems by political means.

The question of Somalia has become a daunting challenge to the peace and security of the entire Horn of Africa region. We appeal to countries of the region to bring all their influence to bear in encouraging peaceful talks and securing early and substantial progress in the Somali national peace process.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Uganda.

I thank Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, and Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace

and Security of the African Union, for their briefings. I also welcome the participation in this meeting of the Foreign Minister of Somalia, Mr. Omaar.

Uganda commends the efforts made by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia to advance the political process in that country. We condemn attacks on the TFG, the civilian population and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) by insurgent groups and foreign elements in an attempt to undermine the political process and reconciliation efforts. Any attempt to oust the TFG is totally unacceptable; it would have a serious impact on peace and stability within Somalia, in the region and beyond. We therefore call on all armed groups and all opposition elements to embrace the Djibouti agreement as the best way to advance the political process. We also call upon those, within and outside the region, who are supporting the insurgents and fuelling instability in Somalia to stop doing so.

We welcome the launch on 25 July of the Joint Security Committee, which is one of the institutions provided for in the Djibouti peace agreement. That is significant because, once operationalized, the Joint Security Committee will coordinate efforts in support of the Somali transitional security sector institutions and also facilitate the disbursement of pledges made to that effect during the Brussels conference.

We welcome the support extended to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and call upon the United Nations and other partners to continue their support to ensure that AMISOM can effectively implement its mandate. We also welcome the additional pledges of troops for AMISOM, which will further strengthen its capacity to carry out its mandate. In addition, we are encouraged that AMISOM has initiated the deployment of its police component following the arrival of its Police Commissioner in Mogadishu on 18 June this year.

In order to build upon the achievements registered so far, it is critical that, at this stage, the rest of the entities supporting AMISOM, including the civilian component, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia and other agencies, relocate to Somalia. That would not only help to strengthen the Government, but also send a clear signal to all that the international community is fully supportive of the Transitional Federal Government and the people of Somalia.

Members will recall that, at its meeting held on 9 July this year, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/19) in which it took note of the decision of the African Union summit in Sirte urging the Council to impose sanctions against those providing support to groups engaged in undermining peace and reconciliation in Somalia and regional stability. Accordingly, the Council expressed its readiness to expeditiously consider what action to take against any party undermining the Djibouti peace process. Uganda will support action by the Council in that regard.

Finally, we thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, and his staff for the good work that they are doing to support the people of Somalia so that they can live in peace and security and rebuild their country.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.